

COOPERATIVE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT  
ACROSS THE SCIENCES  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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**Abstract:** Libraries often discuss cooperative collection development across Libraries in multi-campus systems and across consortia with multiple institutions. Many of these are due to changes in support and in search of efficiencies of scale. Over the past ten years or so, the University of Southern California libraries have dealt with almost yearly changes. In our case this included closing of the Hancock Library of Biology and Oceanography and two other libraries on campus; multiple reorganizations of the overall library system; “marriage” with our Information Technology colleagues on campus and then the “divorce” with additional changes in reporting structures and administrators; changes in storage facilities and access to collections, particularly to the Hancock collection; increases in electronic collections; increases and decreases in staffing for the sciences; and changes in budget, both increases and decreases. One of the benefits to evolve from the changes has been a cooperative collection development approach within the sciences. The evolution of this approach with specific examples will be presented. The scope will include the sciences and engineering with the emphasis on non-health science areas.

**Keywords:** Academic libraries, collection development, science libraries

**University Background**

The University of Southern California (USC) was founded in 1880 by members of the Methodist Episcopal conference of Southern California. It is the oldest independent teaching and research university in the western U.S. USC opened with fifty-three students and ten faculty with a College of Liberal Arts focus, a University band, a debate team, and a library with over 700 volumes side by side with a collection of geological and mineralogical specimens. Its present size is 33,500 students and 3,200 faculty and a four million volume Libraries collection. The University’s earlier liberal arts core is now housed in the USC College of Letters, Arts and Sciences (LAS), in addition to a Graduate School and seventeen professional schools. Examples of the university’s growth and breadth include the Thornton School of Music in 1884; the Keck School of Medicine in

1885; Gould School of Law in 1896; School of Dentistry in 1897; School of Pharmacy in 1905; Education courses began in 1909 with full status as the Rossier School in 1918; School of Architecture in 1919; School of Social Work and the College of Commerce and Business Administration in 1920, the latter now called the Marshall School of Business; School of International Relations in 1924, now part of LAS; Viterbi School of Engineering in 1925; School of Public Administration, now part of the School of Policy, Planning, and Development, and the Department of Cinema in 1929, now the School of Cinematic Arts; and more until the last addition, the Andrus School of Gerontology in 1975. All names in the preceding section are current as of the writing of this paper. In 1952 a separate Health Science Campus (HSC) was established. HSC's administration functions in many ways as separate; however, it is always responsible to the larger, and original, University Park Campus (UPC). The Health Sciences libraries are not the focus of this paper but will be included in the following discussion when appropriate.

### **Libraries**

The first libraries were small and largely within departments. A number of recognized libraries started in the 1920's, including Social Work, Science, Philosophy, and Art. The first free-standing library building (Doheny Memorial Library) opened in 1932. It still houses multiple libraries and the USC Libraries' administrative offices. The subject libraries mentioned above, plus many others, had joined the Central Library System (CLS) by the 1970's to make a total of thirteen in the system with two libraries on the UPC still independent of the system. The Norris Medical Library opened in 1968 as part of the Health Science Campus. Prior to this, library service to the health sciences was primarily provided from the Science Library on the UPC. The Dental School has a separate library, which is a part of Health Sciences, although it is located on the UPC in the School's expanded building which opened in 1969. Law and Health Sciences libraries reported to their respective Schools rather than to the Central Library System. By the late 1980's there were a total of nineteen libraries in the CLS located in eleven buildings, plus the first storage facility, called East Library, which was a former warehouse on the other side of the freeway from the UPC, about a ten minute walk. The last new library built on the UPC was in 1994, the Leavey "Teaching Library," including one of the first information commons. A second storage facility, called Grand, opened in 2000 about a block from East. Since 1990, the CLS changed its name four times: University Library System, Information Services Division (combined with Information Technology and Telecommunications), University Libraries, and the current USC Libraries. This overlapped four Deans, three interim Deans, and multiple reorganizations. The reorganizations will be presented after a brief discussion of the science libraries alone.

The first Science Library, as noted previously, opened in the 1920's and combined some smaller departmental units. The Engineering Library began in 1942 and the two libraries were combined in a new facility in 1970. The new library was called the Seaver Science Library after the building in which it is housed; however, the Library was never officially named, so the preferred name by the Libraries for the past twenty years is the Science and Engineering Library (S&E). The Hancock Library of Biology and Oceanography opened in 1941 as a core part of the Allan Hancock Foundation Building, centrally located at the University Park Campus right next door to Doheny mentioned above. Hancock was an

independent library originally funded completely from the Allan Hancock Endowment and having its own staffing, services, etc., although cooperative collection development and cataloging had been done sporadically in conjunction with the CLS. The Andrus Gerontology Library joined the CLS in 1986, so Hancock was the last independent library to join the central system in 1987. From 1987 until the Hancock Library closed officially in 2003, the Head Librarian reported to various Heads of S&E, the Associate University Librarian (AUL) for Public Services, including one period where the Head of S&E reported to the Head of Hancock. Note that there was no official Head Librarian for the last four years of the Hancock Library as an operating library.

### **Organizational Changes**

Although there were minor changes to the organizational structure of the then called University Library System after Leavey opened, the reorganization effects were most prevalent over the past ten years. Here are the structures primarily as they effected the sciences. Note that when Hancock joined the Central Library System in 1987, there were a total of seven librarians in the two science libraries on the University Park Campus. Tables 1a-1c below show the changes and the effects of those changes on reporting structures and librarian support.

The Coordinator period under a non-librarian Dean and the first interim Dean, a librarian, meant there were fewer direct reports to the AUL for Public Services; the libraries had their own unit heads and functioned relatively independently for daily operations, but worked together when that was advantageous to succeed with projects of common interest.

The Cluster period and the first Center period were administratively the same under the second non-librarian Dean. The change from Cluster to Center was primarily because no one appeared to be able to come up with a good title for the person in charge of a Cluster. "Cluster Head" was not popular. The Clusters, then the first Centers, were a cross between geographic and subject-based on the University Park Campus. Leavey was a Center by itself, but Doheny was considered too large to be a Center alone, so some units within Doheny were combined administratively with units outside, such as Government Documents with the library which included public policy and political science. The organizational structure was a moving target, but the two science libraries were a cluster/center by themselves. The second interim Dean, a librarian, made no changes to the structure during his term.

**Table 1a. Public Services Organization**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Structure</b>	<b>Administrator of the Science Libraries</b>	<b>Number of Library units</b>	<b>Number of Science Librarians</b>
1989-1992	CLS Unit Heads	Coordinator (1) F	2	5
1993	ULS Unit Heads	Cluster Head (also was Head of S&E) (1) F	2	5
1994-1996	ULS Unit Heads	Center Chair - F Head of S&E (2)	2	5-4

F = Faculty

S = Staff

Information Services Division (ISD) was a combination of the libraries, telecommunications, and information technology and the Dean/University Librarian also gained the title of Chief Information Officer (CIO). We then had a librarian in the top position, but the CIO areas received most of his attention, so the libraries got little from him directly and the Associate Dean was highly significant, as she had responsibility for all the libraries, but with neither library experience nor degree. Note that the period from 1997-2006 has the most frequent changes in structure, although that was the longest period for a single top administrator. Both that Dean and his Associate Dean left USC in 2006. It was determined by the University that the marriage of these diverse parts was not as successful as it was hoped to be, so the non-library parts of ISD reverted to separate entities.

**Table 1b. Public Services Organization**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Structure</b>	<b>Administrator of the Science Libraries</b>	<b>Number of Library units</b>	<b>Number of Science Librarians</b>
1997-1998	ISD Centers with Unit Heads	Center Chair - F Head of S&E (1)	2	4-2
1999	ISD Centers with Unit Heads (inc. Gerontology)	Center Chair – F (also served as Head of Hancock) (1)	3	5
2000	ISD Subject-based Centers some Unit Heads (inc. Gerontology)	Acting Center Chair – S (no appointed Heads of Science Libraries) (2)	3	4-3
2001-2002	ISD Subject-based Centers some unit heads (Gerontology moved to Social Sciences)	Acting Center Chair – F (Interim Director of Public Services) no Heads of Science Libraries (1)	2	3-4 one was a temp
2003*	ISD Centers	Center Chair - S	1	2-3
2004	ISD Interdisciplinary Team (Librarians only; staff are in an Interdisciplinary Center)	Acting Team Leader – S (also is Center Chair) (1)	1	2-3
2005-2006	ISD Interdisciplinary Team (Librarians only; staff are in an Interdisciplinary Center)	Team Leader – F (1)	1	3-4

F = Faculty

S = Staff\*Hancock Library closes officially

The next interim Dean inherited just the libraries and made essentially no changes to the internal library structure, although librarians began to be hired for the first time in two years and we were called the University Libraries. The new Dean arrived in August 2007. After nearly a year dedicated to strategic planning, the renamed USC Libraries changed to the present organizational structure in July 2008. See summary Figure 1 below.

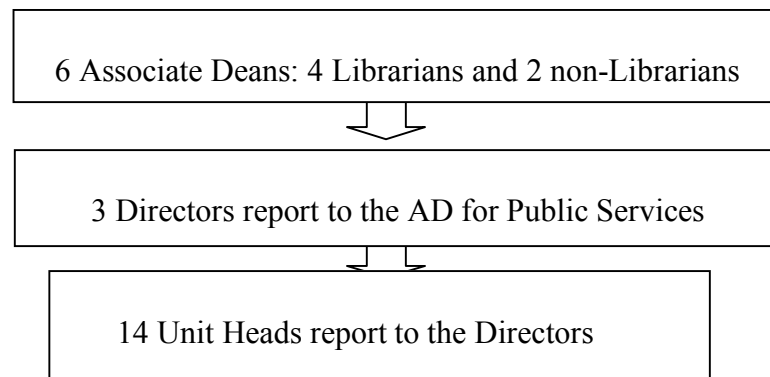
**Table 1c. Public Services Organization**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Structure</b>	<b>Administrator of the Science Libraries</b>	<b>Number of Library units</b>	<b>Number of Science Librarians</b>
2007-2008	Interdisciplinary Team (Librarians only; staff are in an Interdisciplinary Center)	Team Leader – F (1)	1	4-5
2009-2010	Divisions with Unit Heads	Director and Head of S&E - F (1 each)	1	5

F = Faculty

S= Staff

**Figure 1. FY2009- Organizational Structure**  
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#### **Collection Development**

During the CLS and ULS periods from 1970-1997 Collection Development was outside the direct administrative reporting line with individual selectors responsible for their portion of the budget, but without fixed funds and nearly everything had fairly tight oversight. For big ticket items, especially as we moved to more electronic access, the only resort the librarian had was to lobby the Head of Collection Development. Some of these attempts took years to muster enough support to be able to purchase through centralized funds. The Head/AUL/Director of Collection Development, the title varied, was expected to evaluate the subject librarian's effective and efficient use of funds;

however, this was a rare event. If the review was requested, then it was done, but it was not the norm. During the early years of ISD, essentially up to 2000, this did not change, although by this time the person in charge of Collections also had administrative oversight of technical services. Between 2001 and 2003 the subject-based Centers were organized into five to seven groups with Leavey still alone, then Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, and the Sciences, and a varying number of other designated Centers, hence the five to seven mentioned above. The libraries in Doheny fell into both the social sciences and arts and humanities areas. Special Collections was finally added as a Center and later included the language/ethnic collections. Science was the smallest in personnel, both faculty and staff; however, it had as many or more faculty and students to serve as the other two broad discipline areas. The broad subject areas were encouraged to discuss and recommend items across their disciplines that could be funded together or with centralized funds. Science was the only area to have much success, as we were a smaller group and more agile.

With the next reorganization, library staff and faculty were split: staff were in Interdisciplinary Centers and got to keep the more academic sounding Center Chair title and faculty were in Interdisciplinary Teams headed by a more business-like title of Team Leader. For Science we had a series of acting Team Leaders as a search for a Science Team Leader was extensive. This organization made no sense to anyone either inside or outside the sciences as we were expected to act as though we were completely separate, but we were all in the same building by that point and the Center Chair and the last Acting Team Leader were the same person. Here is an example: if a librarian had a project that required student assistance, we had to request the Acting Team Leader to talk with her staff to have someone assigned to us, if she thought the project was important enough. We were not permitted to ask the staff directly for help, even though we had been working side by side for years with some of them.

### **Science Collection Development**

For many years each librarian had their own funds to expend, but no way to combine them or to work together with other librarians to obtain cross-disciplinary resources. Big ticket items had to be argued and lobbied for to the central Collection Development personnel, usually for years, to get what was needed, e.g. almost four years to get the first electronic access to *Science Citation Index* many years ago. Each subject has its own Collection Development Policy prepared by the responsible subject librarian. These are to be updated regularly, but there is no mandate for a specific cycle for updating. For about fifteen years there have been specific assigned subject Regular funds from the University central administration to the Libraries budget and various assigned subject Endowment funds, but Endowment funds were not available for all subjects each year. Prior to this all Regular funds were controlled centrally. Our first approval plans were developed about twenty years ago and took from the Collection Development budget for the Libraries as a whole, which lowered the amount available to designate to specific subject expenditures. At the end of the year, any funds remaining in the various subject funds are centralized and made available for one-time purchases.

At the end of the fiscal year, any funds remaining in the various subject funds are centralized and made available for one-time larger purchases. Until about 2003, these decisions were based on lobbying efforts by the subject selector with whatever faculty support they could garner for the purchase. For about the past ten years, the designated cut-off date for individual fund orders was usually the end of March for foreign orders and the end of April for U.S. orders. By 2000 the selector had specific subject funds available that were generally paired with both Regular and Endowment funds for each subject. Specific subject funds ranged from \$200-\$5,000 each year and there was at least one general, cross-disciplinary fund each year, e.g. General Science funds or Engineering funds, not defined more specifically, available to the science selector designated by the Head of Collection Development. For the past five years, we have received an additional “opportunity” fund of \$30,000-\$40,000 designated for new resources available for one-time purchases.

With the Interdisciplinary Teams structure, Librarians had no more responsibility for such areas as circulation or administration, and we were required to concentrate on four areas: reference, instruction, collection development, and outreach. It was when we finally had a librarian Team Leader, rather than a staff acting Chair or Team Leader, that the organizational structure helped us build our cooperative collection development procedures. Her leadership helped focus our efforts, as she had the same four primary responsibilities as we did. She was also able to increase the number of librarians, first with temporary positions, then more permanent ones. Meetings were usually every other week to discuss our primary collection areas.

The sciences were able to retain the collections structure from the Interdisciplinary Teams, even with the last reorganization, because we all recognize that we have an advantage by continuing the cooperation and we are all located in the same library facility. See the Mudd and Havens article on “Library cooperation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century” to help understand why we were successful. We meet all four of their challenges: geographic, cultural, organizational, and financial.<sup>1</sup> Geographic: We are in the same building so can meet easily to discuss common concerns; Cultural: sciences & engineering have a more compatible culture than all of the social sciences or all of the arts and humanities do, although all include both departments in the College of LAS and one or more professional schools; Organization: our organization within the S&E Library is small and simple, and the last reorganization split the libraries in groups under Directors based on balancing the size of operations for each Director but without consideration of subject, so social sciences and arts and humanities are located under all three Directors; and Financial: we benefit by being able to get more of the materials that our users want and by using our funds more effectively.

### **Current Collection Development Structure**

There is a science approval plan separate from the rest of the Libraries. This was developed about eight years ago, as some of the overall guidelines that worked for the other subjects were causing the sciences to receive materials not needed or wanted by our constituency. This means that materials come in all year long and accounts for about half



of the Science and Engineering monographic materials budget. Four of the five librarians have subject selection responsibilities. The Head Librarian does not, as she has no science subject expertise (yet). For each subject there are Regular funds from the University Libraries' budget and Endowment funds. Each librarian can spend up to 90% (89% in FY2010) of any fund with the remainder reserved to pay shipping, etc. Any item that is more expensive than the librarian can afford from their own funds can be placed on a "wish list" for discussion and ranking. There is a separate "wish list" for one-time purchases and for continuing or recurring needs, e.g. journals. The S&E Meetings are once a month for collections areas and occasionally reference and instruction issues and once a month including both faculty and staff in the S&E Library for operations issues.

Each selector prepares Collection Development Policies that generally are aligned with fund codes. Decisions are to be in line with the Policies. Generally, we can purchase subject faculty recommendations and student recommendations that meet our collection development policies and can also strengthen areas that need attention or where there are new programs, but we cannot get everything that is wanted.

Outreach and consultation with subject faculty has different styles according to the selectors. They range from "everything has to pass by subject faculty," to consultation for "only big ticket items" to determine desirability, to regular contact with subject faculty so the selector has a better idea of new directions so they can be proactive. Obviously, some subject faculty never respond, so decisions are made based on best available knowledge.

Here are examples of how our cooperative collection development has served us and our users well:

1. Because we have a wish list at all times, when special funds are allotted during the year, or at the end of the fiscal year, S&E subjects are likely to benefit when decisions must be made quickly. Colleagues in other subject areas take more time, probably because there are more of them and their interests are more scattered, the Culture issue mentioned above. S&E areas are more interwoven and many of our faculty are cross-appointed in multiple departments and even across Schools.  
In FY 2008, the new Provost provided extra funds to the Libraries in support of our new Dean, and Sciences received more of what we wanted than other subjects, not because the science materials were more expensive, but because we already knew our highest priorities and could move more quickly to respond to a request to recommend purchases up to x dollars.
2. When we wanted a big ticket electronic book package in FY2009, we were able to negotiate with the central Collection Development team to use approval funds, since we would be getting materials electronically rather than in print; we got buy in from Health Sciences, so they contributed from their funds; central funds were added; we used general science and opportunity funds; and all four S&E selectors used some of their subject specific funds to make up the

difference to purchase something that would have campus-wide use. We were unable to get contributions from any of the humanities or social sciences selectors, even though they benefited, as well. That may have accounted for the money received centrally.

The process worked because we presented a cogent argument and had done our homework to know what the cost would be and were willing to contribute our funds, not just ask for central funds.

3. Sometimes there are cross-disciplinary items within the sciences that can be negotiated between science selectors. Our acquisitions department is now able to be more flexible, and can respond when we want to pool funds from multiple accounts to purchase something. Sometimes these discussions do not even reach the group as a whole.

Because of the way we now can work together, we are more willing to pool resources for the benefit of our users rather than keep to the rule of ten years ago where each selector was highly protective of the funds under their purview.

This year we have just received our endowment funds, which has been allotted later and later each fiscal year for the past four years. We continue to revise our wish lists and always rank order items so we can respond as soon as money is available. We actively encourage recommendations from faculty. We also review serial titles to see what we can cancel and what we need to add. These also are rank ordered. Cancellations are often possible due to access from multiple sources, but we check to make sure that the sources are stable and consistent before cancelling from another source.

Do I still have things I want to purchase but cannot? Of course, but I have also been able to acquire things I could never have afforded under the previous everyone-is-out-for-their-own-constituency system.

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<sup>i</sup> Mudd, Sarah and Havens, Andy. 2009. Library cooperation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *NEXTSPACE* (12):4-9.